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ABSTRACT

This paper is intended as an outline synthesis of what is presently known about the processes of pidginization and creolization. Section 1 deals with the linguistic processes of pidginization under the following headings: (1) the learned expectancies of how to behave in a contact situation, (2) necessity and heightened attention, (3) redundancy, (4) perception and re-interpretation, (5) chance and coincidence, (6) universals, and (7) supplementation from the native language. Section 2 deals with the creolization/postcreolization/recreolization continuum, concentrating on the social (and, hence, linguistic) focus that was the outcome of isolation and the social diffusion that in some cases succeeded it. (Author/VM)

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PROCESSES OF PIDGINIZATION AND CREOLIZATION

R.B. Le Page

Summary

What follows is an attempt at an outline synthesis of what is known to date on this subject, within the framework of my own somewhat idiosyncratic approach to language through the behaviour of individuals, the general shape of which was presented in 'Problems of description in multilingual communities' (Le Page 1968). It is presented here for discussion.

In Section 1 I deal with the linguistic processes of pidginization under the headings of:

(i) the learned expectancies of how to behave in a contact situation

(ii) necessity and heightened attention

(iii) redundancy

(iv) perception and re-interpretation

(v) chance and coincidence

(vi) universals

(vii) supplementation from the native language

It is not possible to make these divisions very rigid.

In Section 2 I deal with the creolization - post-creolization - re-creolization continuum, concentrating on sociolinguistic factors and on the social (and hence linguistic) focussing that was the outcome of isolation and the social diffusion that in some cases succeeded it.

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I have tried to avoid the point of view which requires that every speech event must belong to a nameable language system. For me it is enough that it is a reflex of the behavioural system of the individual who utters it. Although I am aware that when speaking loosely I use linguistic terms in the same general sense as most other linguists, I have tried here and elsewhere when being more rigorous to distinguish as follows:

Between (a) the acquisition of language

and (b) the acquisition of a language

and, as a subdivision of (b), between

(i) the 'rules' or systematic considerations which in a child activate his linguistic behaviour, and which as he grows up develop from having a context-dependent grammar (and maybe, as according to Brown 1973, a semantic deep structure) to having a more abstract context-free grammar (and perhaps a more syntactic deep structure).

(ii) the 'rules' of the totemised model or 'standard' language of his community, inherent in its literature, supported perhaps by grammars or dictionaries or the usage of ritual figures (priest, poets, politicians) of which he will have only a partial knowledge and which have only a probability value for him.

(iii) the descriptive 'rules' which the linguist or psychologist or sociologist may abstract from behavioural events within the framework of a general linguistic theory of one kind or another. Such rules have no necessary relationship to the systems of (i), and have only a probability value as predictors of future behaviour.

1.i. <u>The learned expectancies of how to behave in a contact situation; 'simplification'</u>

Robert A. Hall Jr. (1966) and Charles Ferguson (1971) have both dealt with this topic. "It may further be assumed that many, perhaps all, speech communities" says Ferguson, "have registers of a special kind for use with people who are regarded for one reason or another as unable readily to understand the normal speech of the community (e.g. babies, foreigners, deaf people). These forms of speech are generally felt by their users to be simplified versions of the language ... " We do not, however, know if there is any universal hierarchy of linguistic complexity against which we judge such situations and in the light of which we avoid the more 'complex' linguistic forms. If passive constructions, for example, are comparatively rare in pidgins, we do not know whether this is because they are avoided as more complex than active, or as having been learned later by the native speaker, or whether it is because there is a greater degree of coincidence or universality (see below, v and vi) between the syntax of active constructions from one language to another than of passive. Both Ferguson and Hall instance the lack of copular constructions in this 'simplified' grammar, but if we accept the view of John Lyons (1968 pp.322-3) that the principal function of the copula in English is as a dummy carrier for tense, aspect or mood markers, then the lack of a copula in a 'basic' creole grammar and

hence, by supposition, in its pidgin forerunner may be due to the lack of coincidence between specific marking systems for tense, aspect or mood or between the underlying conceptual analyses. Thus, the extent to which our linguistic behaviour to speakers of languages other than our own is simply an extension of our behaviour toward strangers or toward any (e.g. young children) from whom we do not expect ready understanding is unknown; as is the extent to which such behaviour is part of a learned cultural pattern and how much innate or determined by the constraints of the medium.

It seems to be a universal practice to speak more slowly and more distinctly to foreigners, to avoid ellipsis, and to make explicit all the inherent prosodic markers of parts-of-speech and syntax - to distinguish clearly, for example, question prosodies from statement prosodies. It seems to be a learned practice, on the other hand, to reduce surface redundancy (see (iii) below) in paradigmatic markers. Both of these processes are, in the discussion of pidgins, normally subsumed under the term 'simplification'. Subconsciously one does seem to assume that it is simpler for the foreigner to work with invariable words and invariable word-order within an SVO framework varying only the prosody to effect the necessary transformations from statement to question or perhaps operating with tags and with gestures, head-shaking, facial expressions, shrugs, etc. One may suppose that in a contact-situation we keep as many features of our language as invariable as possible, carrying this to the extent of avoiding shifts of register, nuance, etc. (One should certainly avoid jokes.) Cassidy (1971) has mentioned the probability that in early stages of pidginization prosodic changes would suffice for major transformations.

Alleyne (1971) has argued against some aspects of the simplification thesis. He cites the survival in Jamaican Creole of verb forms (brok 'to break' lef 'to leave' los 'to lose', etc.) similar to English strong past forms 'broke', 'left', 'lost', etc. to show that 'the English verb system with verb preterites was in use in the contact situations' (p.173). He may well be right, but his evidence is not conclusive; an alternative hypothesis is set out below in (iv).

The 'simplified' grammar of the resultant discourse is likely to be, taking non-verbal contextual features into account, as complex and as redundant as that of either of the codes it replaces. Moreover, the contribution to simplicity of discourse made by word-invariability will depend upon the degree of coincidence between the nature of the unit 'word' in the native languages of the two speakers involved. But if one judges the complexity of a language on the verbal code alone, Samarin's (1971) statement is probably correct: "we have in the reduction of options a means for characterising historical pidginization" (p.128). Similarly Labov (1971) argues that the lack of tense markers in creoles, their reliance on adverbs of time, is a stylistic limitation. "There is no basis for arguing that tense markers express the concepts of temporal relations more clearly than

adverbs of time. What then is the advantage that they offer to native speakers, the advantage which native speakers seem to demand? The most important property which tense markers possess, which adverbs of time do not, is their stylistic flexibility. They can be expanded or contracted to fit in with the prosodic requirements of allegro or lento style ... " (p.70).

A concomitant of the reduction of options is the high frequency of repetition of any particular item - whether lexical or grammatical. Samarin (op cit supra) draws attention to this fact, which is well-illustrated in the use made of the unit pela (< fellow) in the following passage from the Port Moresby newspaper Nu Gini Tok-tok:

> Dispela kos i bin kamap long Namatanai Kaunsil Haus.
>
> Ol dispela pipal i bin kamap long dispela kos hia lokol gavman kaunsil lukautim ol long haus-slip na givim kai-kai long ol.
>
> Long ol dispela tripela wik hia ol women lainim pasin bilong kukim bred, mekim pamkin skon na kek.

In a sense the speakers in a contact situation are teaching each other the language which they are making up as they go along. Repetition is part of this process. I return to this point under (vi) below, Universals.

ii Necessity and heightened attention

In a contact situation, should one participant wish to distance himself from the other for some reason - for example, through feelings of psychological insecurity or of arrogance - he can readily make any incorrect use of his code by the other an inward pretext for not understanding. In the normal face-to-face situation between speakers of the same language redundancy in their code enables a message to be passed even though some parts of it may be lost in transmission. In the pidgin situation linguistic redundancy is reduced, as explained below, but the necessities of the situation ensure that the participants are in a state of heightened attention to each other and psychologically willing to meet each other more than half way in order to communicate. Thus a lower level of redundancy in the code can be tolerated. When we come to the creolization phase, however, this consideration ceases to hold good, and the code must, therefore, evolve so as to restore the levels of redundancy normal for any native code.

iii Redundancy

I use this term in the general sense in which any analysable phonological, syntactic or semantic function may be performed more than once in an utterance, and may also be repeated in subsequent utterances. The rules of redundancy are probably different for speech as compared with writing, different within oral literature as compared with written, and different for monologue as compared with dialogue.[1] Redundancy in phonology occurs when more than one distinctive feature is involved in a phonemic contrast. In the contact situation this may allow for partial recognition and identification by each party recognising (a) one of the two or three distinctive features involved, (b) the phonotactic rules, and (c) the semantic probabilities. In the grammar of spoken English the parts of speech and the modality systems are specified partly by prosodies, partly by inflexion, partly by word-order and partly by the semantic probabilities; thus I am going, setting its prosody aside for the moment, can be reduced to am go without loss of syntactic specification. However, paradigmatically I am going is related to you are going, he is going, I always go, I went, etc., and knowledge of one's language involves knowledge of such paradigmatic relationships. It involves also knowledge of the semantic relationships between going and walking, and between these and stative words like red. The user may draw on all these relationships within the network which is his language, for analogical and creative purposes. Thus, apparent redundancy affords two facilities without loss of communication: first, it allows for the creative exploration of new kinds of relationship within the system - it allows for change, therefore, at all levels, the use of unusual or unexpected forms; secondly, it allows for loss of part of the message. In a contact situation each of these facilities is likely to be exploited to the full. Exploitation, however, leads to a loss of redundancy. In the contact situation the formally-marked paradigmatic, syntactic and semantic relationships of the speaker's language may not be meaningful to the hearer. Then, the function of morphs and prosodies is deictic, that is, pointing and positioning, in relation to the non-verbal context[2] (which restores the over-all level of information, of redundancy) and it is the non-verbal context and certain linguistic universals which make up or complete the immediate grammar and meaning. Such a 'grammar' is, therefore, context-bound in the sense that it cannot operate outside the particular context of situation on which it relies. The progress of the autonomy of linguistic systems is from the context-bound towards the context-free, from the transient towards the permanent, from the idiosyncratic towards the completely general. The goals of context-free, permanent and universal are, of course, never reached; they are simply present in each individual as goals, and underlie the nature of the abstractions which he makes and the uses to which he puts those abstractions, whether in a linguistic or in any other mediating system.

iv Perception and re-interpretation

The processes referred to here are, in one dimension at least, familiar but perhaps sometimes not treated with sufficient rigour. All behavioural learning in humans is an active process in which sensory data are perceived and interpreted in relation to the cognitive systems which the individual has already constructed; in Piaget's terminology, there is assimilation and accommodation (Piaget and Inhelder 1969 p.6). Motivation then decides the extent to which and the manner in which the individual modifies his systems to take account of the new data, or imposes his cognitive systems on that data. 'Interference' in language behaviour is only a special case of the latter.

Weinreich's well-known study of interference in Languages in Contact deals with it only in terms of identifying or contrasting items in externally-abstracted and fully-formed systems of 'langue' - that is, in terms of the social constructs which the linguist usually studies - even though the starting-point of his work is the bilingual individual. Our studies of pidgin and creole behaviour in contact situations show very clearly what an unsatisfactory framework of reference such a treatment provides for the symptoms we have observed.

The reasons for interference may be subsumed under any one of the four riders to my general hypothesis:

'Each individual creates the systems for his verbal behaviour so that they shall resemble those of the group or groups with which from time to time he may wish to be identified, to the extent that:

(a) he can identify the groups

(b) he has both opportunity and ability to observe and analyse their behavioural systems

(c) his motivation is sufficiently strong to impel him to choose and to adapt his behaviour accordingly

(d) he is still able to adapt his behaviour' (Le Page 1974)

It is commonplace in the case of pre-creole pidgins to speak of English or French morphemes and sentences being re-interpreted through the grids of, for example, West African phonological, phonotactic, morphological, morphotactic, syntactic, lexical and semantic systems. These are gross statements which serve to summarise the social consequences of a succession of individual constructs, some made by children, some by adults, some of whom were highly-motivated to adapt, some grudgingly undertaking what was necessary to survive, some unable to understand very much of

what was being demanded of them. We extrapolate back into the pidgin phase from the evidence of creole systems. But we must remember that in a contact-situation very often the children would be able to learn quickly the language of the other culture, without interference, were it not for social factors such as the influence of their parents which inhibit them. We must remember also the multi-dimensional nature of the perceptual processes, the closely-interwoven mesh of one's cognitive systems. We cannot keep phonological, grammatical, lexical, semantic and contextual aspects of perception separate. Finally, we must remember that the perception and systematisation of linguistic data is biassed for both participants in a contact situation and not just for one.

With these provisos in mind we can return to Weinreich's account of the importance of the psychological and socio-cultural setting of language contact and try to carry his exploratory work a good deal further. He sees the factors involved as on the one hand 'linguistic' and on the other 'extra-linguistic'. "Of course, the linguist is entitled to abstract language from considerations of a psychological or sociological nature. As a matter of fact, he SHOULD pose purely linguistic problems about bilingualism." (Weinreich 1963 p.4) Having done so, it is said, he may find the cause of the susceptibility of a language to foreign influence in its structural weaknesses, or in some social factor. My argument here is that what the linguist, or the speaker, chooses to regard as 'the language' is itself the result of their individual, socially and psychologically conditioned, choice. The objects of our study are our own internal constructs. It is, therefore, not possible to deal with 'purely linguistic' problems, except as rather gross social abstractions.

Thus in the case of pidgins and contact vernaculars one finds, and must expect to find, a wide variety of results emerging from what appears to be linguistically 'the same' situation. This is apparent today in our survey in British Honduras; it must have been true on the West Coast of Africa or on the plantations in the 17th - 18th centuries. In the creolisation phase, as we shall see, the amount of variation in the behaviour of individuals was very quickly reduced by 'focussing' through daily interaction within small isolated communities, so that social norms emerged. During such a period the model offered by a culturally-dominant group may be of decisive importance. Within the pidgin period similarly the role of a culturally-dominant group is likely to have been important in crystallising the form of the pidgin used. This group were in all probability the agents and ships' captains on the one side and the African slave-traders ashore on the other. Each of these groups was to some extent already habituated to pidgin-like behaviour because of the nature of their calling (as described in section (i) above); and thus it would not give a true account of linguistic development if we simply juxtaposed, for example, a West African phonology and an English or French phonology and explained the creole phonology in terms of interference between these two, the re-interpretation of the latter in terms of the former having

given rise to a pidgin phonology which then led on to that of the creole. Rather, one must see the 'interference phonology' as an abstraction towards which the practice of individuals in the contact-situation converges.

That said, we can return to the multi-dimensional nature of the perceptual process. We have to consider phonological, phonotactic, morphological, morphotactic, syntactic, lexical and semantic systems as all inter-related. The re-interpretation of the phonology and phonotactics of 17th century English by West Africans led to the loss of a great many lexical contrasts. The stress and intonation rules for West African languages had to carry the syntactic prosodies of a pidgin English from which the formal marking of the parts of speech had disappeared. The formal markers of the English tense system disappeared and the system's primary distinction became aspectual (see Alleyne 1971).

I have referred above to Alleyne's thesis that the English strong preterite system was used, and not assimilated to the weak verb system so as to 'simplify' English, by English speakers in the critical situation. But the forms /brok/, /lef/, /los/ which he cites from Jamaican Creole may derive from the adoption of broken, left, lost as stative predicates distinct from the normal verb-classes, as perhaps happened also with gone (/gaan/), and the use of their Creole reflexes as, apparently, action-verbs as a back-formation from this stative use under the influence of the grammatical thinking of the model language.

Thinking this way, then:

/hit brok/ = It broke, it is broken

Observation 1. The English words broke, broken derive from a verb break.

Observation 2. Jamaican verbs use the Creole reflex of the English verb invariably for both present and past.

Therefore, /brok/ is the Creole reflex of English break.

However, the fact that the four predicates all belong to a single semantic class which we may describe as deprivative, in which the action leading to the predicate state is necessarily past action, seems to support my interpretation as against Alleyne's. It also underlines a generally aspectual interpretation of creole predicate paradigms, which are more concerned with completed vs. continuing states or actions, rather than with tense.

v Chance and co-incidence

Contact situations are bound to involve a good deal of exploration by both speaker and hearer, which will inevitably result in some lucky and many fruitless sallies. The lucky ones are likely to be immediately reinforced by the participants, each eager to snatch at means of communication; the unlucky ones are unlikely to be often repeated. Coincidence of form with some similarity of meaning between items from two codes will mean that such items will have a high probability of survival in the emergent pidgin code. A lexical example would be English dirty and Twi dɔti jointly giving rise to some pidgin forerunner of Jamaican Creole doti (see DJE). But there will be examples at every level, including prosodic features. It may be that some coincidences are due not to chance but to 'universals'; or they may be in part universally-derived - as with words which have a fairly recent echoic origin or whose form is influenced by echoic considerations. It may be that some syntactic features come under this head e.g. the high probability of SVO order and hence of the near certainty of the survival of this order as a means of defining the parts of a sentence in which definition by morphology is lacking; or iteration for emphasis; or some prosodic features such as loudness for emphasis. I shall return to the 'universals' below. For the moment it is necessary only to observe that between any two linguistic codes there will be a certain amount of coincidence of form and/or function, both syntactic and semantic.

vi Universals

Cassidy (1971) has outlined what he feels to be the basic necessaries for a lingua franca. His universals are derived from semantic aspects of the context in which a pidgin develops, and of the means available to handle these. Thus he claims that "A first necessity in communication is to establish identifications for the two parties ... Not only would names for the interlocutors be necessary but very soon a pronominal system to designate a thou-you party and an I-we party ... These would probably precede the designations of a he-they party ... " (p.213)

Such a line of reconstruction overlooks the fact that each party to the discourse already has a native language and brings to the discourse culturally-acquired assumptions about the nature of discourse and of language - including, one may assume, the need for personal pronouns. The discussion of linguistic universals and their role in the formation of a pidgin language must rather, I think, take fully into account the already-acquired linguistic baggage of the participants.

The publication of Roger Brown's extensive and intensive study of first-language acquisition (1973) raises for us the problem of whether his interpretations of the data, his emphasis on the semantic base of

the child's early operations, their foundation on a sensori-motor scheme, may have significance for the study of pidgins. Robert A. Hall Jr. and others have likened pidgins to baby-talk in certain respects. There are such close parallels between Roger Brown's general framework of reference for child language acquisition - the semantic base, the process of development from a context-bound to a context-free system, the role of prosodies and so on - with my own here, that I feel it necessary to see how far the two processes may be compared.

The contact situation from which a pidgin develops resembles a child-parent learning situation in that there is very little formal instruction in the grammar of the language being learned (probably less in the pidgin situation than for children). It is again like the child-parent situation in that, if both parties are eager to communicate, each conditions the other (there is a place for conditioning alongside creativity in linguistic theory) and an oscillatory or echo-response pattern is quickly established and reinforced whereby the near-misses of the learner are imitated and reinforced by the teacher, in order to gain some common serviceable element. It probably also resembles the child-parent situation in that there are at least some semantic universals - affirmation, question, negation, identity, etc. - which are likely to have a common psychological basis and possibly also some common prosodic and gestural parameters of expression. There are two important differences, however. In the later stages of the child-parent situation the parents retreat before their child's advance towards their model, by correcting his mistakes and giving up baby-talk; whereas in the later stages of the pidgin situation the 'teacher' may not retreat but may be more likely to reinforce the common ground already established and to use it creatively. Thus the parents mediate between the child's own rules and the rules of that social construct, the model language. Secondly, the child has no other system than that which he is creating step by step in his native language, whereas the pidgin speaker's perception is <u>through</u> his native language, and he has that language as a resource language in learning a second one, and in developing the resulting pidgin. His native language then to some extent continues to mediate between that pidgin and his semantic universe.

I have referred so far to <u>formal</u> systems but, as we have seen, R. Brown emphasises the semantic basis of the child's early systems. The child appears to use his sensori-motor schemata as part of the semantic basis for the system of linguistic signs which he creates, and to use these signs then in juxtaposition relying to a great extent on the context (and on intonation) to make his meaning clear. Thus, to use one of Brown's own examples, <u>Mommy sock</u> could indicate either a possessor-possessed relationship or an agent-action relationship:

> This is mommy's sock.
>
> Mommy is putting Kathryn's sock on her. (Brown, 1973, 106ff. citing Bloom (1970))

In the contact situation one can envisage each of the participants searching for events, linguistic and other, which can be matched against their existing semantic schemes. These schemes will for each participant depend to some extent upon the environment in which they grew up, to some extent upon the 'Whorfian' effect of the language of their native community, and to some extent upon their individual genetic potential. To what extent we can point to 'semantic universals' playing a role in pidginisation is unknown. Brown's psychological foundations are as much in the work of Piaget as anywhere; I in turn have borrowed (see above, (iv)) from Piaget the concepts of the assimilation of new sensory data to the individual's existing schemata, and the consequent modification of those schemata through accommodation to the new percepts, in order to understand more clearly the symbiosis of the pidgin situation.

Thus universals which may derive from or apply to native-language learning do not necessarily apply to pidginisation. Nor is it easy to judge what linguistic resources used in pidgins are drawn from a universal stock rather than from a particular culture. It may be that rising intonation is universally used for questions; it may not. In West Indian creoles rising final intonation is commonly used for both statements and questions, but is much more pronounced in the latter case and is then frequently carried by a tag equivalent roughly to isn't it? or no? or nicht wahr? or n'est-ce pas? etc. In Jamaican Creole this tag commonly takes the form of /no/ or /na/; in B.H. Creole, of an extended velar nasal sound /ŋ:/.

It is observable from our data that prosodic systems are the most persistent part of an individual's native language as he becomes bilingual. It is also possible that they are the first feature of one's native language to be acquired and once acquired act as an instrument or carrier of syntactic learning. Some may be universal, such as those which signal sentence-end as contrasting with sentence-suspension; unfortunately, linguists have far too little data as yet to be able to judge, and the subject has been relatively neglected. It has been my own observation in the West Indies that university students from one island could be severely misunderstood by those from another because of the use of prosodies having different meanings in different places. Such features as loudness for emphasis may be virtually universal, although in some West African cultures loud speech is rude.

Echoisms obviously furnish a limited number of language-universals, but here again one must be cautious: the sounds of nature are interpreted through our culturally-acquired perception system just as our speech-sounds are, so that the German cock says kikeriki, the French cock cocorico, the English cock cock-a-doodle-doo; Chaucer's ducks said quek whereas modern ducks say quack. A large number of the many near-echoisms of West Indian creole English are in fact identifiably Africanisms, as in

the common [buʃumm] or [budumm] < Twi burum for the noise of something falling hard, or Emmanuel Rowe's 'imitation' of Bobiabu's noise in flight, ['bu'bu'bu'bu'bu'bu'bu'bu'bu] < Mende bubu, to fly (see DJE).

As to universals of underlying syntactic structure in the Chomskyan sense, if Silverstein's analysis of Chinook Jargon is correct a pidgin has no deep structure; and within the terms of my own analysis, the pidgin would in fact have to be regarded as a code rather than as a language (Le Page 1973), with an underlying semantic deep structure for each of the two contact-speakers. It may be that pidgins again share with child-language the characteristic of having an underlying semantic deep structure and of being context-bound, and that an adult's language is closer to a 'natural language' in having an underlying deep syntactic structure and being context-free. It may, therefore, be a universal of linguistic structures that they can best be represented as being at some stage in this evolution from having a semantic to an abstract syntactic deep structure.

We are left then with certain universals deriving from the nature of the medium, of which loudness and repetition for emphasis are two, aspects of simple juxtaposition for various syntactic purposes another. Finally, we must consider whether such theoretical universals as markedness (see Greenberg 1966) can play a part in assessing the processes of pidginisation.

To consider the theory of markedness in language first: it might be supposed that contact situations and pidgin languages would throw into relief certain processes of marking. It might be thought, for example, that unmarked categories, being both more general and also of more frequent occurrence, would be more likely to survive in the pidgin; or that marking would tend to be re-imposed on an emergent grammar of unmarked categories. On the other hand, a certain degree of conflict arises as soon as we try to apply the criteria of the theory to the actual results of pidginisation. For example, Greenberg's re-capitulation of Hjelmslev's criteria refers (1966, p.28) to the generic category of number. The plural is held to be the marked category; the unmarked may be singular or 'number unspecified': "The singular frequently has no overt mark while the plural is marked by an affix as in English, except for plurals of the type 'sheep'. A more careful statement would be that in no language is the plural expressed by a morpheme which has no overt allomorph, while this is frequently true for the singular." The evidence of creoles, however, seems to indicate that pidgins are just such languages, and that e.g. the semi-agglutinative Jamaican Creole plural suffix -dem results from a syntactic rearrangement of a deictic dem, introduced to mark (redundantly) plurals otherwise only indicated by some kind of numeral:

the puss > di pus	the cat
them two pussies > dem tuu pus	those two cats
dem tuu pus > di tuu pus-dem	the two cats

vii Supplementation from the native language or from some other supposed 'common language' is available at any point in the discourse to either of the parties in a contact situation. It not infrequently takes the somewhat bizarre form of recourse to 'any foreign language'. Thus the

English speaker, stuck for a word in French discourse, is liable to attempt to bridge the gap by recourse to German or Swedish or Italian or any other 'non-English European language'.

2. The Creole and post-Creole stages

2.i Social focussing and social diffusion

A number of linguists working with creoles, myself included, have found it useful for descriptive purposes to construct an idealised language more consistently archaic and homogeneous than any actual speech samples by our informants were likely to be, and to represent divergences from such a construct as variation in the direction of one or another model language (see e.g. Bailey 1966 Chapter 7).[3] At the same time we have usually recognised that we were, in doing so, imposing stasis on flux; that the model itself had always been changing, always receding at one end of the continuum, while the idealised creole base at the other end was in artificially sharp focus due to a lack of evidence about the past or to the selective memory of the linguist/informant. Nevertheless there have been periods when the various Caribbean creoles have assumed distinctive characteristics, and to understand why we must understand the processes of social focussing and social diffusion. We have reached the stage where we have to consider two parents, each competent in their native language and in their version of the pidgin, communicating in the pidgin while raising a child. It is presumed that the child will also hear the parents speak their native languages with other native speakers (either inside or outside the home) and it will hear other speakers than its parents using the pidgin. Thus, focussing (see Le Page 1973) is not as sharp for the first-generation Creole child nor for any child in a multi-lingual situation, as for a child in a mono-lingual situation. Projection, on the other hand, is as important for this child as for any other child; in contrast with his pidgin-speaking parents, he needs to externalise his concepts through the medium of Creole. The child's needs are no longer those simply of communication; from the data of the pidgin and of the other languages he has to create for himself a native language which will fulfill all his needs of self-identification, perceptual analysis, interior monologue and communication. He may be growing up in a fairly stable situation or in one of rapid flux and change. He may belong to a small minority, the children of parents who have married across community boundaries in an otherwise polarised society; or to a large number of 'mixed' children in, for example, a newly-urbanised society (see e.g. Tabouret-Keller 1971). In the case of the West African communities of slave-trade days he would have been one of the children of cohabitation between European men and African women in the coastal slave trade settlements. In the case of Caribbean or Indian Ocean slave plantations, he might have been the child of African parents of the same, or of different, language communities, or of mixed African and European parents, growing up in a community in which virtually all were forced to use the pidgin for survival purposes and in which the creolisation phase was fairly swift and the resultant Creole fairly homogeneous in small communities and fairly stable. We must look first at the homogenising and stabilising influences in a language community of disparate origins.

2.ii Social rules, including language rules, grow out of daily intercourse. The smaller, more isolated and more inter-active the community the more homogeneous, stable and prescriptive will its behavioural rules become. Thus the Creole community of Belize, small, compact and tightly-knit through being surrounded on three sides by the sea, its only communications until quite recently being by water, where all social ranks interacted daily and were united by the common threats of a hostile environment and the hostility of the Spanish, achieved a strong sense of its own Creole identity and a strongly-normative sense of 'Creole' English; the New Orleans French community was rather similarly placed at the mouth of the Mississippi in the 18th century. Many Jamaican plantations in the 17th and 18th centuries were little worlds of their own; communications from sugar-plain to sugar-plain in a mountainous island were very difficult - each plantation took its sugar down to a barcadero at the nearest point on the coast for loading - and so, quite strongly-marked regional dialects of Jamaican Creole emerged. The plantation communities of Surinam and Guiana were equally isolated on their narrow coastal strips. (By way of contrast we can compare the situation in e.g. Hawaii today as described by Labov (1971) and by Carr (1972).)

Thus, while a pidgin is a product of contact, a stable creole is the product of subsequent isolation. Our earliest extensive creole records, texts that is, are not very early: early and mid 18th century. The recent publication of an early Surinam text (De Ziel 1973) is a major addition to our resources for the history of creoles. It is difficult to extrapolate backwards from what we can observe happening today in the case of pidgins like New Guinea pidgin to an earlier age, although perhaps there are some valuable lessons to be learned. Today the speaker of a nascent creole is almost immediately exposed to a model language through education; this was not so in the 17th or 18th centuries. On the other hand, independence movements lead on very rapidly to nationalism which sometimes adopts the creole as its cultural badge in opposition to the former model language; this process, leading to re-creolisation or 'hypercreolisation' (see e.g. Berry 1961) although mirrored in some 17th and 18th century attitudes, was less overt in those days except perhaps in Maroon or Bush Negro settlements. We know that slaves who had been born in the West Indies identified with a creole society in opposition to 'salt water negroes' (qv in DJE) and such scraps of evidence as we have do suggest that Jamaican Creole and the creoles of the other West Indian settlements jelled fairly early in the colonial history of these settlements and in general remained fairly stable as long as the settlements remained stable and isolated. However, since I do not think of 'languages' as anything other than abstractions from the behaviour of individuals, I am unable to accept the kind of formulation of the history of Jamaican Creole sketched out by Cassidy in his paper on 'The Pidgin Element in Jamaican Creole' (in Dell Hymes 1971) or by Voorhoeve (1973). A creole language only 'exists' insofar as it is inherent in the behaviour of a creole-

speaking child or in a book written in creole; it is convenient to use a name for a 'language' when we in fact refer to a succession or cluster of abstractions, but this convenience must not be allowed to lead us astray. Thus Cassidy's statement (p.205) "the gradual restructuring of Creole under the influence of Standard is now giving way to displacement of Creole by Standard" seems to me to somewhat misrepresent linguistic processes. Each child 're-structures' the linguistic data afforded by his elders. Nevertheless, we are very much in Cassidy's debt for the careful examination of lexical evidence which he has carried out.

I will assume that in the very early days of creolisation a child may have had a number of models to choose among outside his home because of the arrival of large numbers of new African slaves, because of the existence of Maroon settlements, because of the existence of household slaves in privileged circumstances as compared with field slaves, because of the child of European/African concubinage alongside those of pure African descent, and so on. We can observe similar multi-lingual choices confronting the children we have been working with in Cayo District, British Honduras today (see Le Page et al 1974) and also in e.g. West Africa. I am assuming further that during such a formative period some linguistic features become marked as belonging to a particular group which the child may or may not wish to emulate. Thus in Jamaica there would be those slaves who had reached the island via one of the Dutch depots, e.g. Curaçao or Aruba, where a Portuguese pidgin was in use. There would be those who had come direct from Africa. There would be those born in the island. There would be those who had seafaring connections. Among the poor whites, the indentured servants, former soldiers and seamen and their children there would be parallel variations. Each group's characteristic usage would to some extent be marked as belonging to that group.

The marking might be at any systematic level and as the creole society developed homogeneity and common behavioural patterns some systematic markers and lexical items would become generally stigmatised and others acquire general prestige. Thus, for example, CVCV phonotactic structure, evidenced by Saramaccan and Sranan and by Papiamentu, was likely to be stigmatised in Jamaica in contrast with the CVC or CCVC structure of English (Sranan bɛrɛdi English bread). Cassidy notes (p.210) "An important part of the decreolisation of JC has consisted in the loss of these final vowels when, as here, they are unsupported by St E. Hence JC glaas and tob" (by comparison with Sranan grâsi and tobo, English glass and tub).

In order for systematic markers and lexical items to be stigmatised or to carry prestige, however, they had to be identifiable. Some features which we regard as 'typical' of the Creole today were perhaps not always so but identified partly as lower-class English. For example, some features of the phonology of JC are undoubtedly reflexes of African phonology and others are undoubtedly reflexes of conservative

dialects of rural English. The loss of the inflectional system of English is due to the contact situation; the use of past markers derived from been (en, wen, ben, min, mi, etc.) is due to the syntactic influence of West-of-England dialect, but the use of these forms with the uninflected verb form for past contexts is thought of as peculiarly Creole.

Pidginisation or the development of a pidgin language is a one-generation process, even though constantly subsequent generations may repeat the process and be strongly influenced in the way they do so by the form of the earlier pidgin. Creolisation is also a one-generation process to some extent, since by definition once a generation has grown up making their language out of pidgin forms, their language is a creole. But, of course, the pidgin only supplies them with the nucleus of a grammatical code and a lexicon and certain analogical generative resources for syntactic and lexical and semantic development; beyond these the new generation will turn, as will any generation, to other resource languages for their data, and to inherent processes.

Although pidginisation through contact is general and constantly going on, the conditions which subsequently lead to the emergence of well-defined creoles are particular, and the characteristics of the creole in each case depend upon the relative size and prestige of the groups involved in the isolated community, the nature of their daily communion, the degree of isolation, and other focussing factors such as the extent of a community of interest and the nature of that interest, the demographic structure of the community (predominance of young people vs. predominance of old, predominance of male or female sex etc.) and the replacement mechanisms of the population. The characteristics of the creole will also depend upon such linguistic features as the nature of the model language, and whether it is the same language as that involved in the contact which produced the original pidgin or a different language.

There are two further respects in which the creole situation may be sui generis. The first is that the creole plantation communities were slave communities; the second, that they were colonial communities. Each member of the community thus had three ostensible options: to identify with the metropolitan country of the slave-owners; to identify with the local creole community; or to identify with the country of origin of the slaves. The first and the last each had their local representatives: the first, in the Governor and the army; the last, in runaway slave communities frequently dominated by former slaves with claims to high social status in Africa. In times of internal stress, the social pulls were centrifugal; whereas in times of external threat the creole society could close its ranks so that blacks, whites and coloured people all identified themselves as creoles. In the post-creolisation years similar forces have continued to operate. Many members of such communities have responded

to the creole situation - as they may to any contact situation - by polarising their behaviour to a greater or less extent depending on the hypothesis and four riders, set out above in 1.iv.

I have referred above to the fact that the early generations of Creole children grow up in a context in which linguistic focussing is not as sharp as that of a child growing up in a more homogeneous community. In other words, he is from an early age accustomed to variability in behavioural systems both from one individual to another and within an individual. As I have already suggested, we can think of the normal linguistic progression of a nascent community in a literate world as being from a context-bound oral and gestural language to a context-free oral and written language; the former tolerant of variation and innovation, the latter highly conventional and prescriptive. (As a corollary, adequate statements about linguistic competence in relation to the latter child may well have a fairly normative appearance, with apparently clear-cut judgments between grammatical and starred forms, whilst such statements will not approach adequacy for the competence of the former child, whose performance will illustrate the need for competence statements to be probability statements. See Bickerton, 1973, Le Page 1973, Labov 1972.) On the other hand the need to identify with the group is the same for the creole child as for other children, and is subject to the same constraints: my hypothesis and riders. In certain respects the 17th or 18th century creole child had no difficulty in identifying the group - it was the group of slaves on his plantation, or the group of white overseers; much less easily could he identify the group of upper-class speakers, and he had little access to them. The at first gradual and then latterly quite sudden onset of education has, however, increased his chances under rider (b) - opportunities for learning - and the possibility of economic improvement his drive under (c) - his motivation - while perhaps decreasing his abilities under (a), to identify the model groups.

The early generations of creole children were in no doubt that there were people who actually did speak African languages - they heard them referred to as 'Africans' or 'Congomen' or 'Ibos'. They were in no doubt either that there were people who actually spoke very white varieties of English; but their contact with such people, unless themselves the children of one or the other, might be very limited and they did not get any schooling in or learn to read in such languages. The advent of education was roughly contemporaneous with the abolition of slavery and the growth of absenteeism; the creole child then began to have the opportunity to learn the system of the standard language, but his opportunities to identify at first hand the group who spoke it decreased to some extent. We can represent this changing situation by a series of diagrams, Figs. I - IV.

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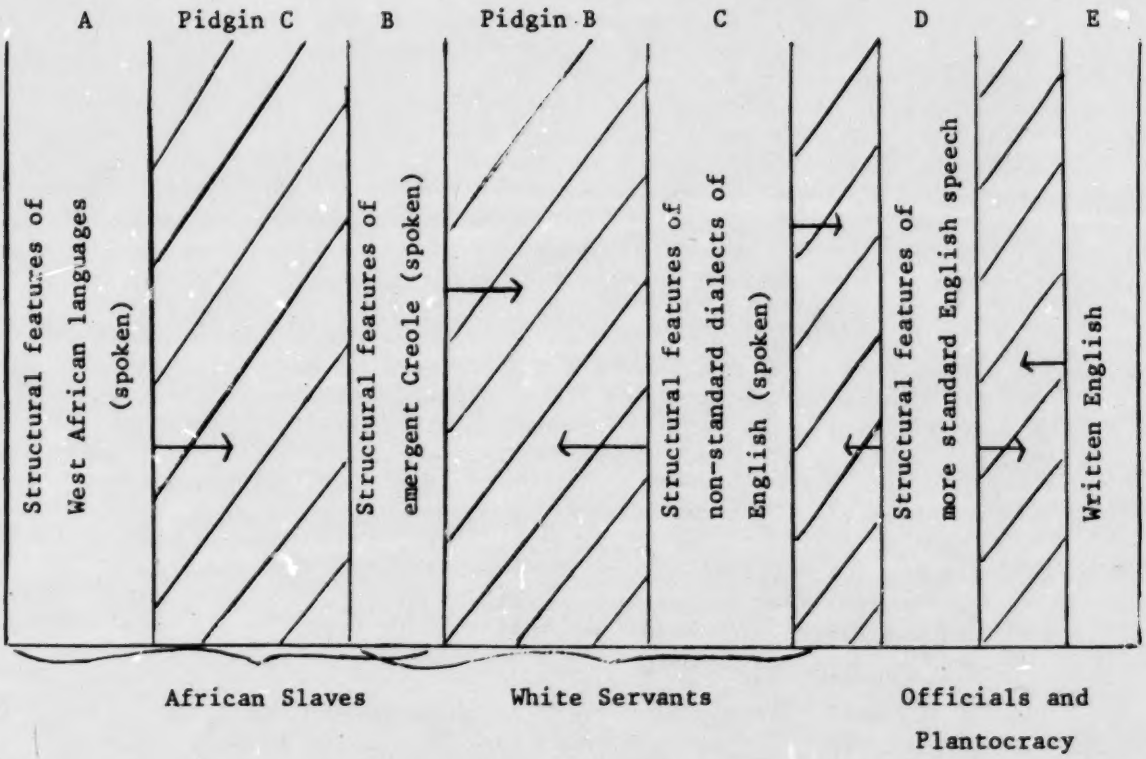

Fig. I Jamaican society in the late 17th century

Some individuals would have been monolingual in A; some bilingual in A and pidgin C; some bilingual in B and A, some in C and pidgin B, some in D and pidgin B, some monolingual in D.

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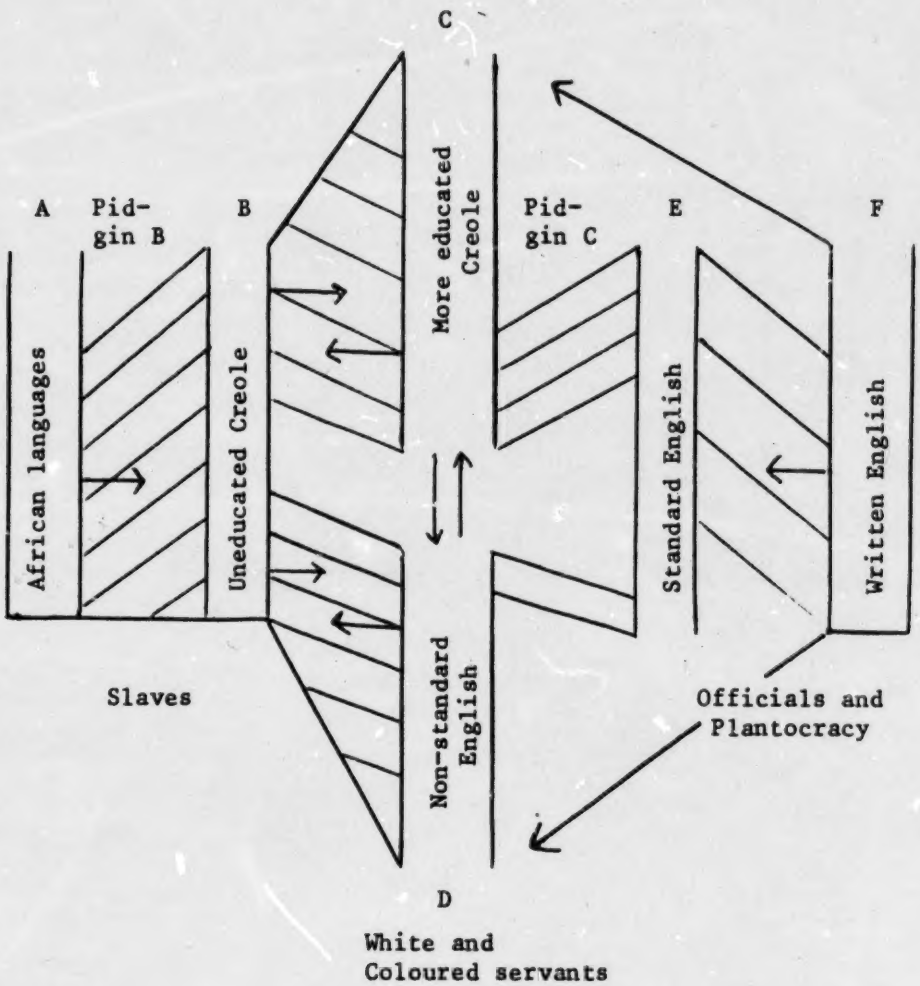

Fig. II Jamaican society in the mid-18th century

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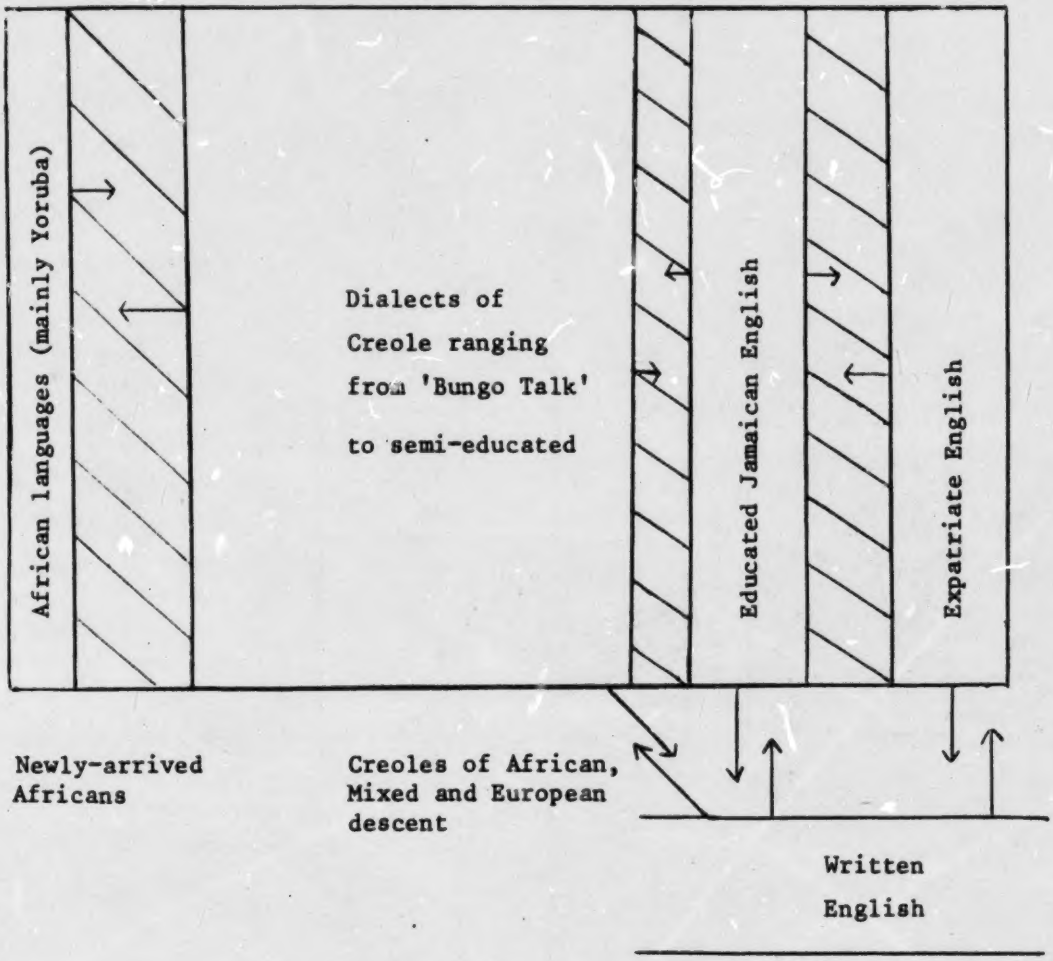

Fig. III Jamaican society in the mid-19th century

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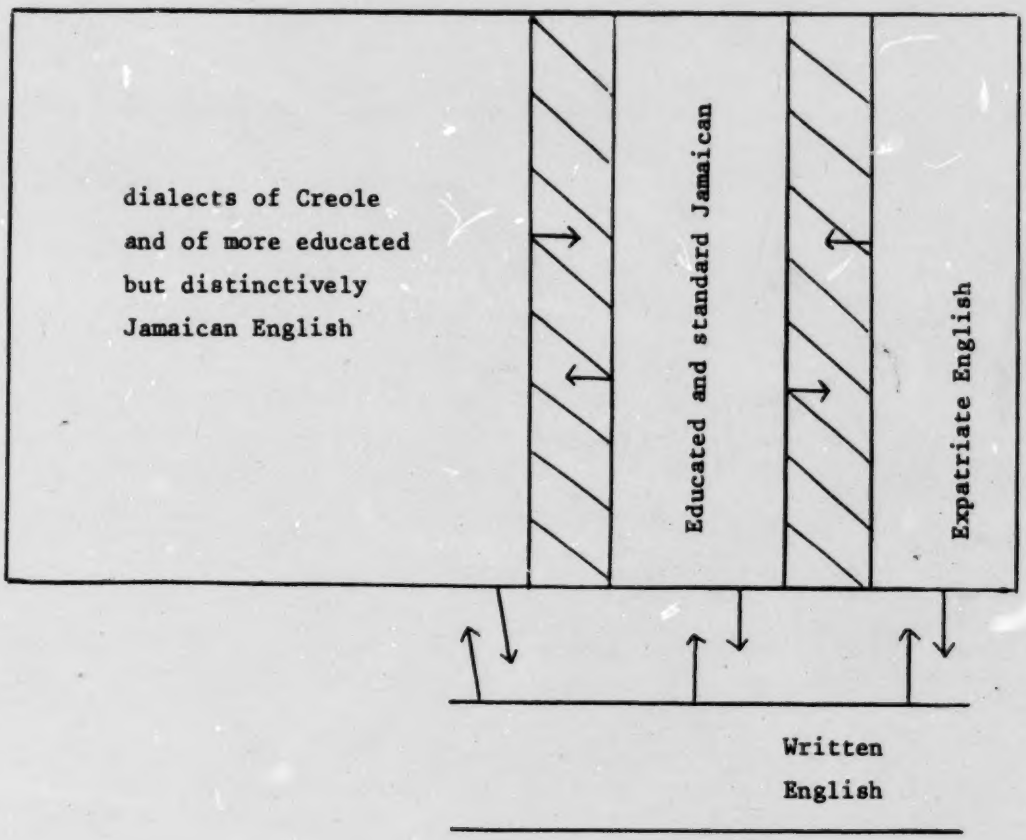

Fig IV Jamaican society in the first half of the 20th century

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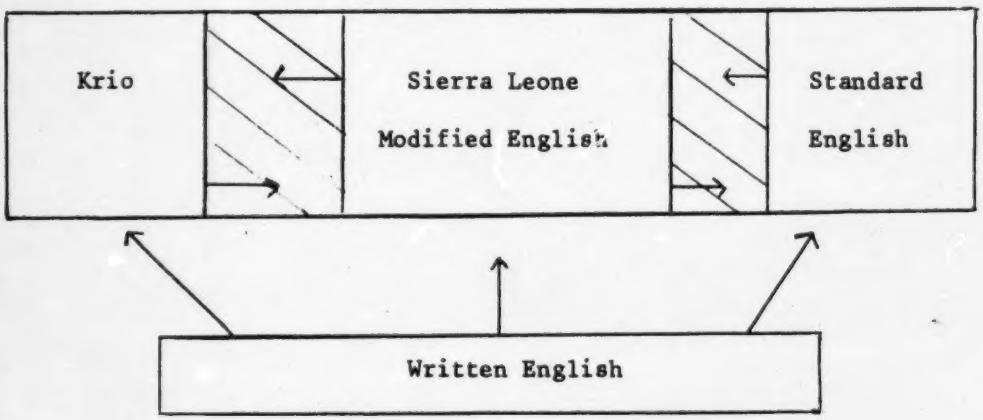
The comparable situation with regard to Sierra Leone Krio has been described by Berry (1961). It is complicated by the parallel existence of West African languages, but, describing the way English loan-words are adapted into Krio, he implies a scale:



The free creole child was taught, through the educational system, what slaves were not taught to any great extent, that the system of the model language was a 'correct' version of which his own vernacular usage was a 'wrong' version. As a result not only were certain linguistic features stigmatised as described above, but insofar as any overt description of a linguistic system was available to and exemplified for the Creole speaker it was that of the model language. This situation is not, of course, confined to Creole contact situations: the grammatical description available to schoolchildren in England has rarely been that of their own vernacular and the terminology and analysis has often been quite foreign to English - reflecting at best a neoclassical literary usage. (In the United States perhaps the situation has in the past been even more dichotomous; I did not understand recent American linguists' obsessions with normative, non-data-oriented grammar until I read in the introductory section of Gleason's Linguistics and English Grammar (1966) an historical account of grammar teaching in American schools in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.) The result of stigmatisation for the creole child, as for any broad dialect speaker, has been that the effectiveness

of schooling has depended on the rejection of the nome, thus setting up divided motivation whose effect is felt under my rider (c). The results of being told that his vernacular was a bad variety of the model language were, as for any broad dialect speaker, on the one hand to lead him to try to map his vernacular on to the grammar supplied for the model language, and on the other to regard the study of 'grammar' as something very important but very artificial - a white man's trick which had to be mastered. The big difference between the Creole child and the - say - West Riding of Yorkshire dialect-speaking child is that whereas it is not too difficult to map a West Riding dialect on to many features of the grammar of standard English, the inherent grammar of the two ends of the Creole: Standard English continuum just do not fit, let alone the grammar of the Creole with Classroom English Grammar.

Let us consider two cases:

Broad Jamaican Creole	Standard English
im de	He is / was there

Beryl L. Bailey (Jamaican Creole Syntax 1966) treats de as a verb. It is easy to construct a continuum from that form to the Standard English, something like:

Im de i de i dɛa i Iz dɛɐ hi Iz ðɛɐ

At some point in this continuum the grammatical structure changes; is /dɛɐ/ verb or adverb? Let us consider further the paradigms:

Standard English	I am sick	I was sick	I am the father	I am running	I ran
Jamaican Creole	mi sik	mi ben sik	mi di fada	mi a ron	mi ron
British Honduras Creole	a sik	a mi sik	a di fada	a di ron	a ron
Barbadian Creole	ai iz sik	ai did sik	ai iz di fada	ai roning	ai ron ai did ron

It seems that we have a broad Creole grammar which does not formally distinguish between verb predicates and non-verb predicates, contrasting with a standard English grammar that does; and within the Caribbean, reflexes of dialectal varieties of English marking aspect with the following forms:

Jamaican punctual completive	ben <	English been
continuative	a <	English a- as in a-running
British Honduras punctual completive	mi <	English been (bilab + V + Nasal)
continuative	di <	English do
Barbadian continuative	-ing <	English - ing
present tense	is <	English be
past tense	ø or did <	Creole ø or English did

Thus, whereas in the pidgin stage, Jamaican Creole

di biebi niem rabat

may be related by the speaker to the grammar of his native language and by the hearer to the grammar of his, with mutually incompatible results but - at a superficial level - no loss of communication (if one accepts Silverstein's argument) at the creole level the reflex of this sentence may be cognitively related to the grammar of the model language (with, non-cognitively, a syntactic deep structure) whilst in fact operating according to the (quite different) grammar (and semantic deep structure) of the creole speaker's vernacular. (The implications of this for learning the model language are quite considerable.) Labov (1972a) has explored the situation in regard to 'negative attraction and negative concord', instancing the fact that "It ain't no cat can't get in no coop" meant, for the Black English speaker, that cats could never get into pigeon coops, whereas it would be likely to mean to speakers of other dialects that cats can always get into pigeon coops. "What process of change" he asks "could have caused a sentence which means X in dialect A to mean not-X in dialect B? And how do speakers of A and B come to understand each other if this is the case?" (p.774)

Labov has carried the discussion of this problem further in Language in the Inner City (1972). 'Is B[lack] E[nglish] V[ernacular] a separate system?' he asks. He concludes that the BEV speaker has at least a perceptual competence in various aspects of the grammar of Standard English, even if he cannot reproduce the SE forms: "This view of the relations of BEV and SE in the competence of black speakers shows that they do indeed form a single system ... The gears and axles of English grammatical machinery are available to speakers of all dialects, whether or not they use all of them in everyday speech." Much as I admire Labov's detailed and painstaking analysis, I fear that his results show nothing of the sort, any more than my own partial passive competence in 'French' shows 'French' and 'English' to be one system. This partial competence is part of my system, that is all. (see Le Page 1973)

As I have said on the first page, it seems to me that 'language' may - for social understanding must - always be understood in three different but related ways. In homogenous monolingual societies the second is some kind of idealisation of the first. In homogeneous monolingual literate societies, the second may well be a back projection from the written language on to an idealisation of the vernacular. In recognised bilingual societies, especially in stable diglossic societies, it may well be that two distinct codes are recognised - each an idealisation. But in our creole/contact society it is felt by many that only the second, the model, has rules, and that the behaviour of the individual in his vernacular is the result of a failure to obey these rules.

That this is indeed the situation is shown by recent survey work in British Honduras. Colville Young (1973) has analysed the behaviour of four groups of his fellow-citizens: school-teachers, second-generation civil servants, first generation civil servants, and manual labourers. He has found the first two groups confidently bilingual in Creole and Educated Belize English, making a pronounced switch between two codes for different contexts and topics; the third group uneasily and partially bilingual with more of a continuum between their Creole and their hypocorrect educated usage; and the fourth group monolingual in Creole with some sporadic adjustments to a more elevated register closer to educated usage for certain topics. R. Abrahams (1972) has shown that a creole can have its own High varieties, distinct from the standard literary language of the educated man. Here the rules are not those learnt in school to 'correct' creole grammar, but those learnt by observation of the oral literature of creole rhetoric - of the preacher and the man of words. But again, if the man of words were asked to formulate the rules for talking sweet, he would be likely to respond, if at all, with reference to the rules of the standard model language learnt in school.

Lexical borrowing and supplementation; 're-lexification'

I wish to argue in this section that whilst lexical borrowing and supplementation from a variety of sources are frequent in the early years of a nascent creole, to speak of 're-lexification', especially if this means treating lexical development as if it happened in isolation from 'the grammar' of 'a creole language' is wrong. The most recent contribution to the discussion of re-lexification is one of the most distinguished, not least because of the author's very considerable knowledge of the unique case of Surinam in which a number of Creole languages have developed symbiotically. Voorhoeve (1973) argues that Sranan and Saramaccan speakers came to Surinam plantations with a basic knowledge of Portuguese Creole. Sranan completely relexified in the direction of English, Saramaccan only partly. The evidence suggests that Djinka is not a product of relexification but developed from an 18th century English pidgin. "It is concluded that both 'normal' genetic developments and relexification may have similar results and

that comparative evidence alone is not a sufficient basis for historical conclusions ... "

The records for Saramaccan and Sranan go back a good deal further than those for most Creole languages; the missionary Christian Ludwig Schumann wrote a dictionary for each, in 1779 and 1783 respectively. I cannot dispute the verbal evidence adduced by Voorhoeve and others for the use of similar lexical items in various Creole communities; but the evidence that is then brought forward to 'explain' these similarities is essentially from social history and not from historical linguistics. And in terms of social history Voorhoeve and others may have given insufficient weight to one possible factor in accounting for Portuguese words in Sranan and Saramaccan, the existence of a large Dutch slave-depot in Curaçao in the 17th century from which the plantations of many colonising countries in the Caribbean were supplied (see Le Page 1960, Chapter IV, especially pp.58-9), and in which still today a Portuguese-based Creole, Papiamentu, is spoken. Further, Voorhoeve refers to Schumann's Sranan dictionary annotation of certain words as 'Djutongo', which is taken to refer to Saramaccan, but which Schumann glosses as follows:

> 'Djutongo nennen die Neger hier die met dem Portugiesischen vermengte Negersprache. [sic] Saramakka - Ningne habi Djutongo.'
>
> (The Blacks here call Jew-Language that Negro language which is mixed with Portuguese. Saramaccans speak Jew-Language.)

To me, (although not to Voorhoeve) the best interpretation of this is that the language under discussion was called Jew Language because it was used by Portuguese Jews and it was a lingua franca which had developed between them and the Creole-English-speaking Negroes. Thus for two reasons it is not necessary, in order to suppose that slaves arrived in Surinam in the 17th century with some knowledge of a Portuguese influenced Creole, to suppose that they left West Africa with it.

The arguments for and against 'monogenesis' for creoles have gone on now for a number of years. I have tried to show elsewhere that genetic models for linguistic development are grossly misleading if pushed to this point, since 'languages' are abstractions which each of us makes for himself out of the behavioural data available to us; I would also maintain that large-scale lexical borrowing always has phonological and syntactic consequences, and that these aspects of one's linguistic system are interdependent.

Conclusion

Different generations of speakers have different models, different goals; they innovate, and their children abstract from their parents' total behaviour, including the innovation, systems which most economically handle, e.g. in the lexicon, rules which for their parents belonged to phonology or grammar and so on. The child so equipped then encounters his peers and his teachers, and evolves with them the language of his community. It is only within such a sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic framework, it seems to me, that a linguistic theory can emerge which can handle adequately the phenomena of pidginisation and creolisation.

FOOTNOTES

1. Samarin (1971) gives some specific stylistic examples from Tonga which could be paralleled from most language communities.

2. Or, in Firthian terms, the context of situation; that is, the otherwise possibly grammatically and semantically obscure utterance is meaningful by providing verbal links to the non-verbal context.

3. More recently, and since this paper was written, Derek Bickerton (1973) has published his very suggestive and helpful alternative approach to this problem, making extensive use of implicational scalograms on lines originally suggested by DeCamp and C-J. Bailey in order to create a 'panlectal grid' to describe the creole continuum in Guyana. I find myself very much in sympathy with Bickerton's practical approach and with much of his theory, whilst having some reservations about the latter which seems to me to retain a basic concept of a 'language' as a linguistic rather than a social construct.

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